

# SOCIAL ACTION

TOWARDS AN  
UNDERSTANDING  
OF  
MEXICO

by  
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# SOCIAL ACTION

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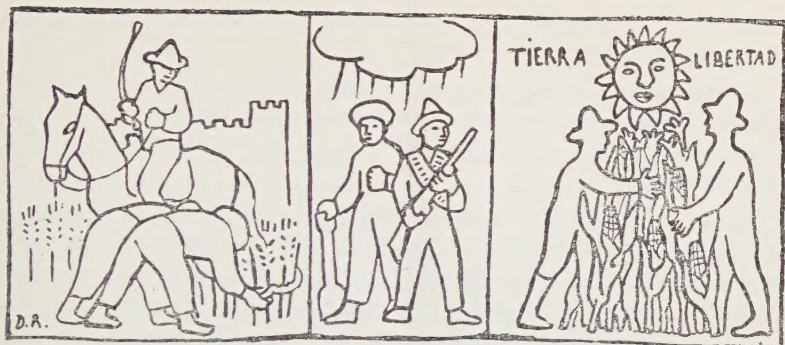
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*The illustrations by Diego Rivera are from two books published in Mexico several years ago.*

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## TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF MEXICO

I would present the people of the United States of Mexico. They are your near neighbors. There are seventeen million of them, citizens of a land varied and charming, rich in achievement and promise. Their history cannot be told in terms of less than two thousand years, a history in which barbarian hordes, priests of human sacrifice, kings savage and enlightened, Spanish conquerors and priests, are ranged just behind the drop curtain of the present stage. Great names stand out on the record, the names of patriots who fought for justice, independence, and enfranchisement. These men are revered as Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln are revered among us. Citizens of the United States should know these men, for they belong to the epic of the independence of the western hemisphere. There was Father Hidalgo, the parish priest who first lifted the torch of freedom; Father Morelos who carried it farther towards victory; the schoolmaster Benito Juárez, whose passion for national unity and freedom makes him as luminous to Mexicans as Lincoln is to us; the leaders of the Revolution since 1910, men of courage and conviction. You should know these men. You should know also the humble Indian of the village, the man who bore the yoke of an insupportable slavery, but whose eye is today kindled with an unconquerable hope. If you look closer, you will see that it is the same light which has glowed, brilliantly or clouded, in the eyes of our greatest leaders. Mexico demands the things we of the United States demand—the right to develop her national life in dignity and strength.

I invite you to meet Mexico. You will find her difficult to know, but it will be worth the effort. I warn you at the outset that there are several wrong ways of going at it. I shall start this pamphlet with a few warnings.

Do not pity Mexico. There is nothing to warrant it. To be sure, she has poverty. So have we. She has disease; so have we. She has bull fights; we have lynchings. She has grafters; so have we. She has dishonest politicians; so have we. She has bandits, but they are not so effective as are ours. So save your pity. Mexico neither asks it nor needs it.

Do not forever compare countries. Of course, Mexico is different from the United States. She turns a quite different face to the problems of life. She is Indian and Latin, we are predominantly Anglo-Saxon, North European in psychology and blood. Forget the easy mistake of assuming that the thing which is different is perforce inferior.

Do not set out to do Mexico good. She is not a candidate for improvement by the outsider. She undoubtedly needs all kinds of improvement, as do we, but she is quite obstinately set upon doing her own improving—as, indeed, are we.

If you can avoid these detours, and drive on down the main road, you will discover a Mexico immeasurably rich and rewarding. There is gold there to be had for the taking.

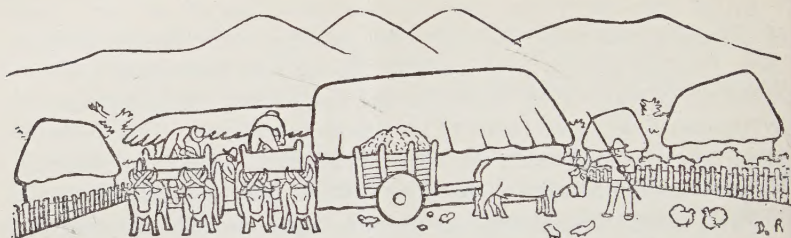
## Mexico—an Indian Land

You will not find Mexico in the broad boulevards or *plazas* of Mexico City. You will find Mexico in the little villages tucked away in mountain valleys, sprinkled on high plateaus and on the coastal plains. This is Indian Mexico. Here life goes on much as it did a thousand years ago. Corn is ground with the same *metate*, a flat stone with a stone pestle plied by the labor of women and girls. Ancient feast days are still observed, with the costumes which were used in Mexico when Nero was misruling Rome. The thin veneer of Spanish language and religion is transparent; beneath it gleam the features of the Indian, unconquered and unconquerable.

In the year when that greatest social iconoclast of all time, Jesus of Nazareth, was throwing down the gauntlet to the Roman Empire, there lived in what is now southern Mexico and Guatemala a people called the Mayas. They were wise and resourceful. They had learned to compute time by the habits of the sun and the moon. They probably knew how to predict eclipses. They built great cities and temples in what is now the Mexican state of Yucatán, in Honduras, in Guatemala.

Three hundred years later, at the time when the Emperor Constantine was baptizing Rome into the Christian religion, there settled on the high plateau of Mexico a group of Nahua tribes, usually called Chichimecas, of which the leaders were the Toltecs. These people developed a high level of civilization and considerable scientific skill. In the ninth century, they were ruled by the great priest-king, Quetzalcoatl, who stands out in Mexican history as a figure of perennial hope. He was wise and humane, believed in education, and encouraged all that made for peace and prosperity. Driven out by his enemies, he disappeared, and legend had it that he would one day return out of the waters of the East, and usher in a reign of peace and plenty. Cortés played upon this messianic hope when he arrived in 1519, intent upon gold.

We cannot record here the successive struggles between the various branches of the Nahua tribes, nor their contest with the Mayas of the South. If you are interested in the fascinating tale of the rise and fall of empires within the limits of present-day Mexico you should read a little book by Herbert J. Spinden, *Ancient Civilizations of Mexico and Central America*. We must content ourselves here with noting the emergence of the last Indian people to conquer the valley of Mexico—the Aztecs. These, too, were a branch of the Chichimecas. They came down from the North. We find traces of their hand in Arizona, New Mexico, and northern Mexico. They occupied the valley of Mexico about the middle of the eleventh century, at the time when the Normans were invading Britain, the crusaders were starting off to retrieve the Holy Sepulchre, and the Huns were invading China. They established the great city of Tenochtitlán on a swampy island in Lake Texcoco, 7400 feet above the sea. This city was built in stone brought down from the mountains. By the time of the arrival of the Spaniards in 1519 it had become a city of no less than 200,000. It was this city which became Mexico, the capital of New Spain.



## Mexico—a Spanish Land

Mexico is not only Indian, but Spanish. The countryside is punctuated with graceful churches with lines reminiscent of Sevilla, Córdoba, Granada. The music of the people, the pottery which they shape by hand on wheels moved by tireless feet, the textiles woven on tiny looms in village homes, all reveal the influence of Spain. The Indian note is not lost, but Spain is also there. Mexico speaks the language of Spain, but two million Indians cling to their ancient Aztec, Tarascan, Mayan tongues. The religion of Spain has its universal hold upon Mexico, but it has served as a frame into which the Indian has fitted his own ancient beliefs.

The Spaniard arrived in 1519. Hernán Cortés belonged to that brilliant galaxy of highwaymen of the sea who, during the last days of the fifteenth, and the early days of the sixteenth century, added the bulk of South America, Central America, and great areas of North America to the holdings of the Spanish crown. Courageous, hard, unscrupulous, they moved under the drive of three great hungers—the greatness of Spain, the zeal for their religion, the passion for gold.

Cortés had some six hundred soldiers—a boisterous, unprincipled, jealous, brawling gang recruited from the back streets of Spain. He had a few cannon, fifteen horses and an indomitable will which changed the history of the western hemisphere.

The conquest of Mexico was a drama of swift intensity. Six hundred men against an empire; conspiracy, forced marches, ambushes; the obstacles of unknown mountains, strange diseases, unknown languages; superstitions and vain hopes; the triumphal winning of an

empire. The founding of Vera Cruz, the City of the True Cross; the shuttling of messengers back and forth between Cortés and the mighty emperor Moctezuma who ruled Tenochtitlán, high in the mountains, 200 miles from the sea; the march to the inland city of Tlaxcala, where Cortés bound the ancient enemies of Moctezuma to him; the sacking of the holy city of Cholula, and the wrecking of the altars of human sacrifice; the ascent to the valley of Tenochtitlán; the trickery by which the Emperor was seized and held as hostage; the robbery of the stores of gold and treasure; the expulsion of the Spaniards, and then their final recapture of the city; the raids north and south by which Cortés and those who came after him made Spain supreme in a territory which reached north into what is now the United States, and South to the isthmus of Panama—there is the stuff of which drama is made. Students of present-day Mexico will want to reread Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico*, overdrawn as it undoubtedly is, or better still, to read the *Journals* of Bernal Díaz del Castillo, one of the men who accompanied Cortés, and wrote down the fantastic tale whose chapters he had shared.

One other name should be remembered, that of the gallant priest, Father Bartolomé de Las Casas, who was moved to holy wrath by the cruelty of the conquerors. He saw the Indians of the new world murdered, enslaved, exploited. He saw their rights stripped from them, and all legal recourse denied them. He returned from America to the Court of Spain, and plead so long and so eloquently that the "New Laws" of 1542 and 1543 were enacted. Under the terms of these laws, Indian slaves were to be set free, except in limited instances; the inheritance of the *encomiendas* (the grant of great areas of land, which carried with it the virtual ownership of all Indians living within those areas) was done away with, and the granting of new *encomiendas* was banned; and all churchmen and royal officers were to be removed from their possession of *encomiendas*. But the efforts of the great-hearted priest were unavailing. The "New Laws" were fought by the groups which held the power of life and death over New Spain, churchmen and politicians alike, and their application was indefinitely postponed.

So Spain laid her heavy imperial hand upon Mexico, including much territory now possessed by the United States, and other territory later

split up among the republics of Central America. Spain built churches and convents; by the end of the sixteenth century there were four hundred convents alone in Mexico; she built palaces for her colonial rulers; she took out great fortunes in gold and silver which financed Spanish wars of conquest and glory; she drained off the wealth produced by the slave labor of the Mexican Indian to enrich the Court and a host of favorites who shared in the plunder. The Indian paid the bill, working from sunup to sundown, without rights, without hopes, without recourse to any tribunal of man or God. The Church stood by, consenting to the outrage. Other priests of the order of Las Casas arose, but their voices were lost in the babel of profit-making.

## The Epic of the Mexican Revolution

There is dignity and splendor in every authentic movement for human liberty. All true Americans, North and South, are stirred by the long struggle of Mexico for independence from foreign oppression, for the cleansing of its own house from exploitation. Mexico's revolution began in 1810, and it swung on down through the nineteenth century and on into the twentieth. In its first phase, it was directed against Spain; in its second, against the exploitation of dictators who seized power and continued the exploitation of the poor; in its third, against the interference of foreign powers; in its fourth, against the economic and political oppression of its own ruling class; and finally, against the economic exploitation of alien financial interests. It is all one movement of national redemption. It is the Mexican Revolution, which with all its flaws, errors, cruelties and defeats, is the most real fact about Mexico today.

### *Hidalgo—Morelos—Iturbide*

The Revolution began in 1810. The banner-bearer, a humble village priest, Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, aroused by the abuses of the Spanish Viceroy and the sufferings of his people, shouted the battle cry, *El Grito de Dolores*, "Viva Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe y mueran los gachupines" (The City of Dolores, "Long live Our Lady of Guada-

lupe, and death to the Spaniards"). The villagers responded; eighty thousand flocked to the standard of Hidalgo, which bore the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe. Hidalgo led his motley army, conquered the sizable cities of Celaya and Guanajuato, and retired towards Guadalajara. There followed encounters of incredible cruelty between the revolutionists and the Spanish army. It has been called the "War of the Virgins," the Mexicans carrying the banner of the Virgin of Guadalupe, dark-skinned, black-haired, sober-eyed, the protector of the Indians, and the Spaniards the banner of the Lady of Remedies, fair, blue-eyed, white, Spanish. Hidalgo and his army were defeated, and the patriots were butchered in cold blood. The unrest was too general to be ended by Hidalgo's defeat and death in 1811. The cause was carried on by another priest, José María Morelos, but he and his armies met a similar fate. The honor of emancipating the country was reserved for Agustín Iturbide, who in 1821 published the Plan of Iguala which marked the end of Spanish rule. Iturbide, the unworthy leader of a great cause, made himself Emperor Agustín the First. Mexico, having won freedom from foreign emperors, was not minded to accept one of their own. Iturbide fell in 1824.

### *Santa Anna*

The tyranny of Spain ended, Mexico suffered for a century under a succession of dictators and soldiers of fortune. She was a nation of illiterates, and proved easy prey to the men who sought to gain power and wealth at the expense of the people. Two of these stand out in the years from Iturbide to 1910. The first, Antonio López de Santa Anna, had a stormy and audacious career from the time he led the revolutionists in the capture of Vera Cruz in 1824 down to the time of his death in 1874. He had a hand in unseating Iturbide, he was many times president, dictator, "Serene Highness." He was at the helm in 1845-48, during the war with the United States. He bears the stigma of much of the responsibility for that inglorious struggle. He is blamed for accepting the Gadsden purchase, under which Mexico lost additional territory. He aided the foreign interloper Maximilian, and then turned against him. He conspired against Juárez, and was exiled.

## Juárez—Díaz

Thus were the hopes of the Mexican revolution denied during the ninety years which lie between the casting out of Spain and the revolt of 1910, but there were hopeful chapters. Mexicans will never forget the squat but shining figure of the schoolmaster of Oaxaca, Benito Juárez. He saw what others had not seen, that the hope of creating a free democratic nation in Mexico lies in education. He created the first great public schools of the republic, he entered the national life as Vice President in 1851, he became President and the leader of the nation in resisting the French invasion and Maximilian. When the French troops had been expelled, and Maximilian shot in 1867, Juárez resumed the presidency. He had used up his energy fighting the foes of Mexico, and he died a broken-hearted man in 1872. With justice he is called the Abraham Lincoln of Mexico. He, too, fought to end slavery and to unite his country. He had a noble serenity of character which has enshrined him in the affections of Mexico.

The second great dictator of the century was Porfirio Díaz, who ruled as President from 1876 to 1910, with the exception of four years. Díaz was astute and ambitious. He believed that Mexico was best served by creating a compact body of strong leaders. He believed, too, that Mexico's interest was served by encouraging the entrance of foreign capital, and under his rule British, American, and other alien interests gained control of oil and other mineral wealth, of land, of business. The days of the Díaz regime were golden for foreign capitalists and for the elect coterie of the *científicos* who formed the inner circle of Díaz' court. Great plantations were created out of public lands, and by the wholesale robbery of the *ejidos*, the communal lands of the Indian villages. The Indian became a serf on the land which had belonged to his fathers for centuries. He was worked long hours, at wages so low as to create inevitable debt; his burden of debt was used to hold him in slavery, and was passed on from father to son. Díaz made revolt inescapable. He was 80 years old in 1911 when the crash came. The structure of prosperity and pride which he had built upon the tortured backs of the Indian collapsed, and he fled to Paris to reflect upon the ingratitude of nations.

There, perhaps, he reread history, and studied the writings of Alexander Hamilton, who also believed that the interests of the people are best served by the rule of the rich, the wise, and the able.

## The Storm Breaks in 1910

Porfirio Díaz presided proudly over the Centennial of Mexican freedom in 1910. The capital glittered with the gaily bedecked carriages of the wealthy plantation owners who gathered in honor of the octogenarian dictator. The finest of French champagnes flowed like water; the costliest of dresses and jewels adorned the ladies of privilege; no cost was spared to advertise the greatness and the prosperity of the Mexican people. The display pleased Díaz and delighted the cultured court which surrounded him; the youth of Mexico back from French schools danced until morning, happy in the confidence that they would inherit this pleasant kingdom. They knew not what they did. They did not see the storm clouds. Iturbide, Santa Anna, Díaz had sown the wind, and now the whirlwind was ripe for the reaping.

The fundamental causes for unrest were clear. The outsider had possessed the nation. He had seized oil wells, gold mines, copper mines, silver mines; he had secured deeds to great tracts of the best land of the Republic. The chosen few held a monopoly of the basic necessities of life. Prices rose, wages did not move. The poor grew poorer, the rich richer. The Indian was totally unrepresented in the national life; the middle class was given no voice, was accorded scant economic opportunity. Other causes were more immediate and compelling. The financial depression of 1907 had created great unrest. There had been tragic crop failures in 1907 and 1908. Strikes in the copper mines of Sonora and the cotton mills of Orizaba had been put down with incredible brutality. The growing influence of American business interests—oil, mining, and land—had served to create widespread fear of Yankee imperialism. The stage was set.

The first murmurings of revolution were heard in 1906. The landless farmers of the state of Morelos, led by Soto y Gama and others, attempted revolt. In Yucatán, the brave-hearted Felipe Carrillo Puerto was preaching the rights of man. In 1909, the gentle, altogether sin-



cere, and quite ineffective Francisco Madero announced his candidacy for the presidential elections of 1910. Madero was sent to jail for his temerity. Díaz was triumphantly reelected. Madero was released from jail and started to organize the revolution. His success was swift and conclusive. In 1911 he captured Ciudad Juárez, just across the river from El Paso, and he entered Mexico City in June. Porfirio Díaz at last saw the futility of opposition, and fled to Paris before Madero arrived. Madero became president, and set out upon the task of organizing the country on constitutional lines. He was not destined to succeed. He was too impractical, too weak-willed, and he had too many greedy friends. The old guard of privilege and wealth, backed by foreign capital, launched revolts in the North; the agrarians, their fury whipped to white heat by the prophetic voice of Emiliano Zapata, rose up in the South; the American ambassador, Henry Lane Wilson, gave moral comfort to Madero's enemies; Victoriano Huerta, commander of Madero's army, turned traitor.

Madero was shot, and the reactionary Huerta took his place in February 1913. The reactionaries rejoiced, they thought the revolution dead. They did not know their country. Forces had been released which could not be stopped. The Agrarian forces of Zapata refused to be stilled, and kept up their agitation in the South. Their cry was *Tierra y Libertad* (Land and Liberty). In the North, Pancho Villa, half villain, half patriot, kept up his guerrilla warfare. In Washington, Woodrow Wilson made known his hostility to Huerta, and refused to recognize him. Huerta was forced to resign, and in October 1915 Venustiano Carranza emerged as the dominant leader. Carranza was something of a patriot, but he was conservative, stubborn, inefficient, tyrannical. The Constitution of 1917, which carried radical provisions for the nationalization of mineral wealth, and for the distribution of the land, was passed in spite of him. He was not the man demanded by the times, but he was better than many who opposed him. He fell in 1920 before a group of military leaders which included Alvaro Obregón and Plutarco Elías Calles.

Obregón became president and ruled until 1924, when he was followed by Calles. The rule of these two men from 1920 to 1928 brought the fulfilment of many of the promises of the revolution. Beginnings were made in the enforcement of the oil code, in-

sureing to the nation the control of its subsoil wealth; in the expropriation of large landholdings, and their division among the villages; upon the enforcement of the labor codes, guaranteeing minimum wages, limits upon hours of work, and the assurance of the right to organize and to strike; and upon the enforcement of the laws controlling the Church. There were grave abuses in their administrations, and serious defeats of their honest intentions, but by and large the period stands out as one of national reconstruction and organization, and of an honest effort to protect the masses of the people. That they failed at many critical points is true; but that they succeeded in giving some substance to the dream of a united and just Mexican nation is also true. So the revolution swept on, bad men undoing the work of good men, but with hope undimmed. The present president, Lázaro Cárdenas, after a year in office, and after breaking with Calles, gives promise of leading the government with a vigor unsurpassed in recent years, and with an honesty and purity of purpose which may give him a high place on the long hard road of the Mexican Revolution.

## Three Words

There are three words which may be used as symbols of the struggles through which Mexico has passed and is still passing. I give them to you as pegs upon which to hang the things you hear and read about Mexico.

### 1. *Land*

We have seen the way in which the Spaniard apportioned out the lands of New Spain to the princes of the State and the Church. The assignment of these lands carried virtual ownership of the people who lived upon them. The state of these workers was tragic. Forced labor was the rule, hours were cruel, wages pitiful. As time went on, there emerged a growing group of *mestizos* (mixtures of Indian and Spanish) who took places in the lower governmental offices and in the lower ranks of the clergy. This worked for some degree of amelioration of the conditions of the *peón*. The stern hand of Spain relaxed but little, and the Indian's right to work his own land was severely limited. Throughout the colonial period and on into the first thirty years of the republic, the Church became increasingly a landowner. By

the end of the colonial period, it was estimated the Church held half of the real property and capital of the nation. The Indian was increasingly an alien on the land of his fathers.

The cry with which the agrarians of 1910 went to battle was *Land and Liberty*. The cry goes back farther than 1910. In 1856, the Law of Lerdo decreed that the Church should be separated from its land holdings. It was hoped that the land thus set free would be divided in small holdings among the people. It was a hope defeated. The holdings of the Church passed into the hands of newly rich creoles, and a new landed aristocracy was created. The constitution of 1857 attempted to carry the restitution of lands still farther. It, too, failed. The poor remained in peonage. The rich extended their holdings.

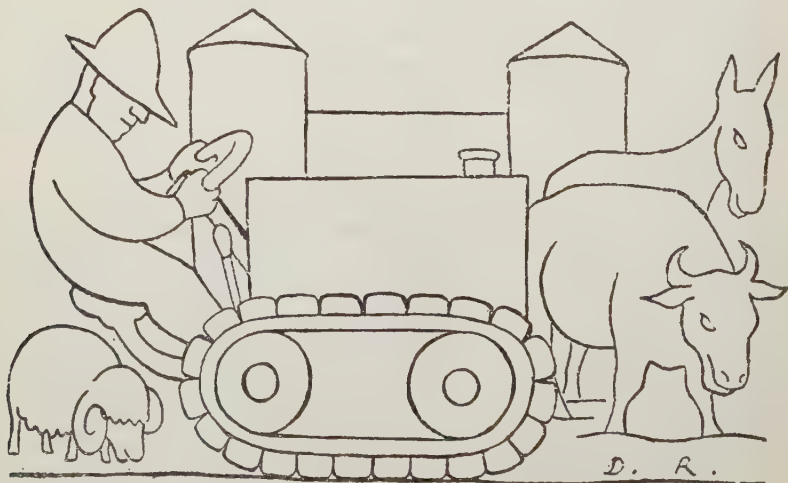
Porfirio Díaz, during his thirty years in office, used the lands of the people to reward his favorites. He broke up thousands of the ancient *ejidos*, communal village holdings which had survived even the cruelties of Spain. He paid his political debts with the inalienable patrimony of the poorest of his people. It is estimated that Díaz was responsible for alienating lands previously held in communal units by over three million Indian owners. When the storm broke over the head of Porfirio Díaz in 1910, the land of Mexico was owned in great *haciendas*, or plantations, in blocks of 50,000 to 1,000,000 acres, with a few great *haciendas* running up to ten and twelve million acres in extent. In three states of the nation, Mexico, Oaxaca and Morelos, less than one half of one percent of the population owned any land whatsoever—and this in predominantly agricultural states in which there were no industries of importance. *Land and Liberty* had clear meaning to the 99.5% who owned nothing.

The hunger for land made revolution inevitable. The provision for meeting this land-hunger was left on the doorstep of the revolutionary leaders of 1911 as an unescapable duty. Madero made vague promises, but his relatives and friends were among the great landholders. He did nothing. Carranza made half-hearted attempts to restore lands alienated by Díaz, and made gestures towards the division of the great *haciendas*, but achieved little. Obregón promised, but his own interests as a great landholder dimmed his vision. Calles did more. He launched in 1925 a great campaign to subdivide the large holdings, and to restore lands to the villages. He fulfilled his promise in large

measure. By the end of 1927, some thirteen million acres had been distributed, but then Calles' enthusiasm for land reform began to wane. He acquired lands for himself and for his political allies, and was responsible for creating one more class of great landholders. During the years 1928—1935, land distribution almost stopped, but with the advent of Lázaro Cárdenas to the presidency, the distribution has again begun.

Criticism of the Mexican land program is intense. The great plantation-owners, Mexicans and foreigners, protest the breaking up of their great holdings. They cry "confiscation." They admit that the Mexican government pays for the lands, but with bonds which forthwith sink to a value of a few cents on the dollar. The Mexican government answers that Mexico simply proceeds upon the right of eminent domain jealously held by every nation. When the public good and the right of private property collide, the public good is paramount.

It is argued that the lands thus distributed are ineffectively and wastefully used. The plantation owners argue that production was greater under the old system, that the Indian is not prepared to work the land as he should. The argument has a familiar ring. It resembles those used to demolish democracy. Democracy, whether in government or land ownership, does not work; let us perforce pick a few men of



position, fine heritage, wealth and ability, and let them run our government, control our land and other resources. This was the philosophy of Alexander Hamilton, and of many others before and after. Americans who prefer the Jeffersonian tradition will understand what Mexico seeks, and will be ready to encourage Mexico to suffer the inevitable pangs of the democratic method, convinced that the only way in which peoples learn to rule is by ruling, the only way in which men learn to till the soil is by having a stake in that soil. The various breeds of slavery—land, political, social—may present a neater face, but they are increasingly alien to aroused consciences.

If you wish to read further of the struggle between the Agrarians and the conservatives, buy a recent book by Rosa King, *Tempest Over Mexico*. It is the graphic story of her experiences in the state of Morelos, the scene of the bloody and magnificent struggle of the farmers led by Emiliano Zapata. The reading of her story will give you a quickened sense of the human drama which lies behind the bare and unadorned record of the struggles which began in 1910.

The final proof of the justice of the land program of Mexico lies not in figures of production, but in the increased dignity which has come to the Indian. No longer is he a slave and a tool. He may be poor, but his pride is rooted in the ownership of the land. There is still a long way to go in the economic emancipation of the Indian, but Mexico has taken significant steps. The results, though often meager, are heartening to the believer in the tenets of democracy.

## 2. Church

That is the second word. It looms large in the Mexican scene. The struggles between the Church and the State have embittered Mexican internal life, and complicated the relations of Mexico to other nations.

The Church during the colonial years won the allegiance of the people of Mexico. It was no nominal allegiance. The pageantry and imagery of the Roman Catholic Church met the longings of the people. The Church was elastic enough to allow the incorporation of many of the forms and ceremonies which had come down from Mayan, Tarascan, Toltecan, and Aztecan peoples. The lovely story of the Virgin of Guadalupe, the dark-haired, somber-hued Mother of the

Indians who appeared to the humble Juan Diego in 1534, is more than a legend. It told, and it continues to tell, the Indian that the Mother of God was an Indian, and that the Christian religion belongs to the Indian. The humblest housewife takes heart no matter how hard the daily grind may be, for over her *brasero* (charcoal stove) hangs the reproduction, in gaudy and satisfying colors, of the Holy Mother. The chauffeur who drives you at fearful speed around sharp corners has that image pasted on his windshield. Schoolgirls carry her medallion on a chain about their necks. The Anglo-Saxon, who never understands such things, puts it down to superstition, and insists upon talking about sanitation and safe driving. The Indian makes no reply, he need make none, for after all the Mother of God is an Indian. Who can deny that he is right?

The church question in Mexico has many angles. The Church was so firmly entrenched by the time Mexico broke with the mother country that few dared speak of such ideas as toleration, lay education, the separation of the Church and State, the secularization of cemeteries, the abolition of tithes, the adoption of civil marriage, or the suppression of the religious orders. The revolution was cabined and confined from the very start. The Church ruled, and the Church was on the side of social conservatism.

Furthermore, the Church was so strongly entrenched as a great landholder as to make her an uncompromising ally of all social and political reaction. She had a stake in the existing order. Her leaders fought obstinately for the retention of her accumulated power. Her great possessions made her a ready target for greedy and desperate leaders and dictators. Much of the zeal with which politicians have attacked the Church has been inspired by the desire to profit from her wealth. The Church met all attacks and arguments with an uncompromising firmness. The Church can take no other stand in light of her doctrines. Convinced that she possesses the final authority, delegated by God, she is conscience-bound to demand that her voice be heeded.

There emerged in the first decades of the nineteenth century a new and contrary conviction, that the rights of man are above the rights of the Church. Repeated attempts were made—in 1833-34, in 1838, 1842, 1847—to limit the wealth, privilege and power of the Church,

but they were met by a determined coalition in which the higher clergy, the military leaders and the land-barons locked arms. Not until 1856-59 did the opponents of the Church's economic and social power prevail. They then stripped the Church of its great holdings, and not since then has it loomed as a major economic force in the Republic. That the stripping of the Church was carried out carelessly and ineffectively is true. The lands thus gained went not to the people, but to a new landed aristocracy.

Under Díaz, the Church regained much of its lost power. Ways were found of circumventing the laws, and the Church prospered materially, though it did not regain its imperial domain. The clergy under Díaz exerted great influence. It was a coalition of reaction, in which the role of religion was to give consent, if not to bless the tyranny of Dictator, *científico*, and *hacendado*.

Grateful exceptions must be noted. There were many humble priests who did not share in the loaded tables of the princes of Church and State, and who were moved by the sufferings of the *peón*. When the story of those years is finally written, it may be that the true story of the Church should be written in terms of those priests rather than of the higher clergy who sat down at meat with Porfirio Díaz.

When the revolution of 1910 broke, it was inevitable that the Church should become the target of the rebels. The contest was not primarily one between religion and irreligion. It was a contest between two rival social philosophies. On the one hand was the entrenched privilege of the ruling class, the industrialists, the landowners, the military chieftains, the old politicians. The Church was allied with them. Opposing this alliance were the agrarians who demanded the division of the lands; the labor forces which were in arms against the tyranny of the emerging industrialists; the rising middle class of small tradesmen who had been denied any share in government; the common soldiers of the army who felt more sympathy for the workers from whose ranks they had come than for the generals who seized the major share of the rewards. The Church was damned for the company it kept.

As the revolution swept over Mexico, the fury reached the steps of the churches, and on to the very altars. Church-bells were ripped from

their moorings and melted down into bullets; the gold with which altars were encrusted was peeled off, and melted down; pictures and images of priceless value were carried away.

The anti-Church spirit of the revolution is revealed in an incident from the state of Yucatán. Felipe Carillo Puerto, one of the most idealistic and radical of the leaders of 1910, moved to organize the workers in the *henequén* (hemp) fields, and he succeeded in marked degree. A man of prophetic cast, fired with a passion for human justice, he gained a firm hold upon the affections and confidence of thousands of the most cruelly exploited workers of the Republic. He called a great convention of the workers to meet in the central plaza of the capital city of Mérida. He said many things that day, but one portion of his speech has been reported to me by an eye-witness. "Comrades," he said, "in the name of God, you had your lands taken from you. In the name of God, you became slaves upon the lands of your fathers. In the name of God, your rights were stripped away; you worked from sunup to sundown for five to ten *centavos*; the courts and the laws gave you no help; you were held in bondage without recourse to any leader. In the name of God, the church-bells called you to work at break of day, and not until sundown did those same bells ring to release you. In the name of God, your wives and daughters were dishonored . . . Now, in the name of the devil, you have your lands, you have your liberties, you have the right to hope." And from ten thousand throats there rang out the cry, "*Viva el Diablo!*" "*Viva el Diablo!*" (Long live the devil).

Was this justified? I submit this question. If you had lived in Yucatán, working under the most abominable slave condition on the American continent; if you had worked twelve to fourteen hours a day for five cents; if you had been beaten and chained for the slightest infraction of the rules of your master; if you had seen your seventeen year old daughter on the night before her marriage taken away by the son of the plantation manager, and been powerless even to voice a protest; if, on top of all else, you had seen the Church keep silence, and the priest stand by consenting, what would you have said to Felipe Carillo that day in Mérida?

This accumulated fury against the power of the Church was given form in the Constitution of 1917, and in the successive acts of Calles

Portes Gil and Cárdenas. The Church was stripped of all its possessions. Church edifices became the property of the nation, to be used by the congregations as tenants of the nation. Priests were stripped of virtually all citizenship rights. They cannot vote, or hold property, or teach, or express opinions on governmental issues. Education was secularized. All religious orders were abolished. Priests, in order to function, must be licensed by the state, and laws of various degrees of severity were passed by the several states, providing for the number of priests to be permitted within the borders of that state. In some states, one priest is allowed to each 500,000 of the population, in others, one to each 50,000.

These laws regulating the Church aroused a storm of anger which has torn the Mexican nation for ten years; they brought down a torrent of wrath from faithful Catholics in the United States and abroad. They cut across the very deep religious convictions of millions of loyal Mexican Catholics, depriving them of the consolations and ministries of religion.

I attempt no justification of the course of the Mexican government. Their acts, it seems to me, have been marked by unnecessary and unjustified severity. Nor on the other hand do I justify the attitude of the Catholic Church. They have entered upon a day of fearful atonement for centuries of ungodly alliance with the forces of reaction.

Nevertheless, the heart of Mexico is overwhelmingly and devoutly Catholic. Any policy which overlooks this fact is destined to fail. I venture the prophecy that in spite of laws and edicts, the Roman Catholic Church will continue to command the devotion of the masses of Mexicans for many years to come. Further, I believe that the interests of Mexico will be served by that Church. The Church will develop as the nation develops. There are present in her the seeds of change. There will come a greater sensitivity to social justice, just as has come to the Catholic Churches, and all Churches, in other lands. The Catholic Church, growing in wisdom and human appeal, will serve free Mexico.

There is another aspect of the church question in Mexico which must be stressed. Protestantism has at times shown ambition to win a foothold in Mexico. Missionaries from American denominations

have been at work there for many years. The results, numerically, have been meager. Some excellent work has been done in education, in hospitals, in social service. But the future of Mexico does not lie with Protestantism. It is too cool, too lacking in imagery and pageantry, to win the man of Indo-Latin blood. It was born of northern climes, and fits the mood of the lands where snow flies. Protestantism would do well to abandon its ambition to proselytize in this Catholic land.

There is another emphasis which must be made. It ill behooves the Protestant to exult over the sufferings of the Roman Catholic Church in Mexico. There is suffering. Thousands of devoted and sensitive believers are grieved to the breaking point. The indictment with which the Roman Catholic Church is confronted in Mexico, no matter what exaggerations or unjust asseverations may be made against that Church—that indictment may be made against Protestantism. Organized religion, be it Catholicism or Protestantism, has tended historically to ally itself with the aristocratic, the reactionary and the privileged. I have told you of the stand which the Mexican Church assumed at the beginning of Mexico's struggle for independence. I would put alongside that statement the clear record of the attitude of leaders of the Congregational Churches of New England in the same period. The fight was on in 1800 between the aristocratic federalists led by Alexander Hamilton, who believed that government should be vested in the hands of men of position, wealth and ability, and the republicans, led by Thomas Jefferson whose faith in the unrealized capacities of the common man stands out in contrasting light. That was the real American Revolution—Bunker Hill and Lexington were but skirmishes. The great test was whether America would be faithful to the vision of a purified and energized democracy. Jefferson stood for that vision. And the Congregationalists, the leading protestants of that day? I can quote from one Congregationalist of that day, the distinguished and learned Rev. Timothy Dwight, President of Yale College. In 1800, he hurled his warning against the perils involved in the election of Thomas Jefferson—"We may see our wives and daughters the victims of legal prostitution; soberly dishonored; speciously polluted, the outcasts of delicacy and virtue, the loathing of God and man." The record might be extended. The history of the first fifty years of American independence reveals

the predominant tory attitude of the outstanding clergymen. The Mexican and the New England settings were quite different, but the same tendencies were manifest. Organized religion joined forces with social reaction and against the democratic ideal. Of course there were notable exceptions in New England; but there were also exceptions in Mexico.

### 3. School

When the revolution of 1910 broke, the dominant cry was *Land and Liberty*, but following hard after, there was another and equally urgent cry, *Tierra y Libros*, (Land and Books). Neither Spain nor the dictators had provided many schools. The Church had good schools in the cities, and at times made an effort to bring some education to the masses. In 1910, fully ninety-five percent of the people were illiterate.

Schools were demanded by the villages. Their leaders saw themselves bested by the clever men of the cities who could cite laws, make arguments, and defeat them in legislatures. They demanded education as the key to participation in the life of the nation. Madero talked vaguely about public education, but could do little. Not until the coming to power of Obregón in 1920 were serious steps taken towards furnishing schools for the villages. Obregón picked as his minister of education the brilliant, if erratic, José Vasconcelos. Vasconcelos launched a program of public education which was imaginative and daring. He saw the vision of a free school in every hamlet. He saw these schools as training centers for social reconstruction and democ-



racy. He saw Mexico united and redeemed by these *Casas del Pueblo* (Houses of the People). They were to be fundamentally Indian schools. They were to magnify and dignify the Indian tradition. They were to be centers of community life, training-centers for life. The school was to teach the simple academic subjects, but also to offer education in agriculture, animal husbandry, the trades, homemaking, health, and recreation. It was to prepare boys and girls to take their part intelligently and militantly in the life of the new Mexico.

Fifteen years have passed since that program was launched by José Vasconcelos. In spite of the interference of political self-seekers, the program has developed steadily and hopefully and, at times, brilliantly. Obregón gave his backing to it, so did Calles. Cárdenas now President, believes in education with the passion of a zealot. Moisés Sáenz, who served as Under-Secretary of Education during much of that period, brought the leadership of a trained educator and of an imaginative and daring executive. There were thousands in the ranks, state directors of education, supervisors, and the village school-teachers who have given substance to the dream of the Revolution. Today, there are almost ten thousand rural schools, vital centers of social welfare and training in citizenship. These are the unassailable vindication of the essential integrity of the Mexican Revolution.

Let me give you one human document, the contract under which the Federal Department of Education installed one little school in the State of Hidalgo. This contract speaks for itself, and for the intensity of devotion which lies behind the rural school system of present day Mexico.

"We, the neighbors of Boxaxni, belonging to the Municipality of San Salvador, in the State of Hidalgo, assembled together near the chapel of our village, solemnly promise in the presence of Professor José del Carmen Solís, the representative of the Department of Public Education, to establish and maintain our own school in accordance with the following conditions:

I. Every one of us will pay the teacher one cent daily; we being fifty-three in number, will pay consequently fifty-three cents daily; this amount will be regularly collected by the treasurer of the School Committee and delivered to the teacher precisely on the last day of every month.

II. We will, by turns, give the teacher meals of the quality which our poor economic circumstances will permit, promising to deliver these meals to him in such hours as not to interfere with his school work.

III. We promise to give the teacher a house which he may use as his residence.

IV. We will give a locality for the school and little by little we shall erect the annexes which it may require later on.

V. We promise to send to the said school all our children of school age, both boys and girls, and we, the adults, will also go to the school in so far as our work permits us.

Professor Solís solemnly promises on his part that the teacher appointed by him will comply with his duties as a good teacher, teaching the children and the adults, advising all the neighbors in all the affairs of vital importance. He also promises to visit our school frequently for the purpose of ascertaining that it is running with regularity without encountering any difficulty on its way. As security for constancy of our obligations, we enter into this agreement, on Saturday, the 9th of February, in the year 1929, at 5 o'clock in the afternoon, and signed by those who know how to sign, and the names of those who do not know how to sign appear on the list."

## The Role of the United States

The United States is regarded with widespread suspicion by the intelligent leaders of Mexico. This suspicion is rooted deep in the history of a hundred years of relations between the two countries. It was first aroused by the expansionist policy of the United States in the early years of the nineteenth century. The thirteen colonies of North America, loosed from England and become a free nation, reached out with amazing vitality and consciousness of destiny. We bought the great colony of Louisiana from Napoleon in 1803, and the Mississippi became an American river along 4,000 miles. We bought Florida in 1814 and 1819. In 1836, under the manoeuvrings of our nationals, Texas seceded from Mexico. In 1845, under the obstinate belligerence of President Polk, we declared war on Mexico. Our

troops penetrated to the capital city of Mexico, and won victories which gave us power to write the terms of peace in 1848, under which Mexico ceded Texas north of the Río Grande, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Nevada, Utah, and a large part of Colorado. We paid Mexico fifteen million dollars for this empire. This war left scars upon the relations between the two countries which have not healed. The expansion of the United States during the rest of the nineteenth century and during the first years of the twentieth did not quiet their fears. We bought Alaska, took Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the Philippines. The restless Theodore Roosevelt fomented revolt in Panama, and annexed the Canal Zone. We treated the Caribbean area as an American Mediterranean, and dealt with Haiti, Santo Domingo, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Panama as though they were bad boys on parole. When Díaz was overturned and revolution swept Mexico in 1910, we assumed the same attitude towards her government. Mexicans believe, and with much evidence, that our Ambassador, Henry Lane Wilson, helped to create the atmosphere which led to the assassination of Madero. President Wilson, preoccupied with Europe, alternately threatened and retreated. He withheld recognition, and ordered the occupation of Vera Cruz. When at last, in the regimes of Obregón and Calles, 1920-1928, Mexico had won assured stability, and sought to enforce the provisions of the Constitution for the conservation of oil resources and the distribution of land, we cracked the whip of interference and intervention. In 1927, we were on the point of sending in our troops to force Mexico to accept our opinions on what constituted proper legislation, and to protect the decidedly dubious rights of our oil operators, among whom Edward L. Doheny and Harry Sinclair were dominant.

These are some of the items which stick like burrs in Mexican memories. If they sometimes exaggerate, it is only human. They have enough solid facts from which to start. When Japan uses our Caribbean and Central American policy as moral justification for her excursion into Manchuria; when Italians mildly suggest that what Mussolini proposes to do in Ethiopia is of the same breed of national business as our doings with Mexico in 1845-48, what answer can we make? We can answer, in fact we have answered, that from now on we will be good, and not steal our neighbor's chickens. The quite

logical retort is, "You have stolen all the chickens you need; your virtue is the virtue of repletion."

Fortunately for the interests of peace between the two countries, there has been a great change in the attitude of Washington towards Mexico during the past ten years. This change has been reflected in the character of our Ambassadors. In 1924 Calvin Coolidge appointed James R. Sheffield to the Mexican post. Mr. Sheffield was a man of unquestioned probity, but his sympathies, social philosophy, and outlook on international affairs made him an utter alien on Mexican soil. He knew the niceties of law. He told me in 1926 that his job in Mexico was nothing more and nothing less than the "protection of American lives and property." This was not enough. Mexico was throbbing with new life and hope. Its oil program, its land program, no matter what the legal aspects might be, were the outreach of national faith and determination to protect the rights of the common people. To all of these hopes, Mr. Sheffield was totally insensitive. He kept hammering on the refrain "American lives and property." In 1925, Secretary of State Kellogg despatched a note to President Calles, which was certainly inspired, if not actually written, by Ambassador Sheffield. This document, reread in the light of ten years of subsequent history, is one of the most astounding pieces of international insolence ever released from a foreign office. It served notice on Mexico that only a strict protection of American lives and property, only a rigid adherence to international law, would ensure the continuance of American support of the Mexican government; it suggested that rumors were abroad that another revolution was in the making; and it wound up with a statement which would be regarded as the grossest affront by any proud people—"The government of Mexico is now on trial before the world."

The note threw the fat into the fire. President Calles replied in a note marked by restrained wrath and large dignity. "If the government of Mexico is now on trial before the world, such is the case with the government of the United States." It was the right answer, and the American press and public generally applauded Calles and condemned Washington. Nevertheless, for two years, Mr. Sheffield continued at his post, friction increased, and by January, 1927, American intervention seemed likely. In January 1927, a group of Ameri-

cans of which I was a member, interviewed President Calles. In response to a question from our group President Calles announced his willingness to accept arbitration of all the outstanding issues between the two countries. This declaration made the first page of many newspapers in the United States. Immediately, the demand was voiced from public-spirited citizens of the United States for the ending of the belligerent tactics of Mr. Sheffield, and for resort to the calmer arbitrament of conference. President Coolidge moved by this appeal, accepted the resignation of Mr. Sheffield, and sent as Ambassador and personal representative Mr. Dwight W. Morrow. It marked a turning point in our relations with Mexico. Mr. Morrow knew the niceties of law and property rights. He had not served the House of Morgan without learning those lessons. He knew other things more important. From the start he liked Mexicans, and Mexicans liked and trusted him. He and Mrs. Morrow approached Mexico as eager friends, not as attorneys for alien and threatening interests. They (I include Mrs. Morrow, for she was scarcely a second to her husband in healing the wounds which our relations bore) loved Mexico, its arts, its villages, its schools. They learned to know the Indian, and to think about the problems of Mexico in terms of the ambitions of the Indian. Their patent and entirely genuine liking proved the solvent in which problems of law and rights melted. They ushered in a quite new day.

The tradition established by Mr. Morrow has been continued. Mr. J. Reuben Clark, who succeeded Mr. Morrow, contributed greatly to the peaceful and just solution of the questions which vex our relations. Mr. Josephus Daniels, a man of Jeffersonian simplicity and utter purity of purpose, disarms suspicion, and serves to persuade the Mexican people that the United States really proposes to deal honorably.

The year 1935 sees the relations between Mexico and the United States on a surer foundation for mutual respect and good will than they have been at any time in a hundred years. Three presidents—Coolidge, Hoover and Roosevelt—share in the credit for their excellent appointments to the embassy in Mexico.

## Mexico and the United States—Next Steps

Geography has placed the United States and Mexico cheek by jowl; natural resources complement each other; we will live together for better or for worse. The concern of the citizens of the United States should be to ensure that during the next one hundred years we atone for the sins of the hundred years that have gone.

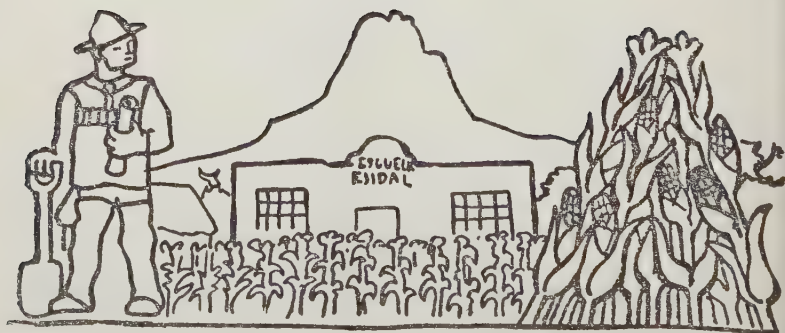
The first obligation which rests upon us is to deal justly in our international relations. This involves continued respect for the sovereignty of Mexico. Mexico is not a colony of the United States, a fact sometimes forgotten, a fact which must be made increasingly clear. Mexico possesses the same right to make her own mistakes as we. She has the right to pass any laws she pleases, at any time she pleases. If these laws offend us, we may protest, but we cannot interfere. If these laws create new conceptions of property rights, which bear down heavily upon American nationals who have invested their money in Mexico, we will have to say to those American nationals, "You took a gambler's chance, and you must exercise a gambler's sense of sportsmanship." If these laws outrage our fellow religionists, we will say to them, "We sympathize with you, we disagree with much that Mexico does, but we insist that Mexico, in the field of religion as elsewhere, is free to order her destiny in her own fashion."

The second obligation, is that we should further the interchange of cultural gifts between Mexico and the United States. Mexico possesses gifts of spirit and brain which will enrich us. We should reciprocate, when welcomed, by sharing the best which we have. It is a hard task for one nation, rich and proud, to arrange such sharing with another nation, not so rich, but equally proud. That is the problem which confronts the United States.

There is needed a new kind of international representative and interpreter. For instance, there is a man in Guadalajara, supported by the American Board, whose task is that of an interpreter, nothing more nor less. He stands in that great Mexican community as an outpost of a phase of United States public opinion of which few Mexicans are aware. Through casual contacts, through social service activities, through civic enterprises, he announces in unmistakable and persuasive words that there is in the United States a great body of

men and women who covet a more genuine spiritual and cultural tie with Mexico. So he interprets the United States to Mexico. On the other hand, out of his deep feeling for Mexico, he is finely equipped to interpret Mexico to the United States. Such a man should be multiplied many times. These will be the unofficial ambassadors of the new rapprochement between the American peoples.

The future relations of Mexico and the United States may prove either happy or strained. The result will be determined, on our side, by the attitudes we assume. Pride, superiority, an arrogant dominance, will yield years of hate. An eager curiosity and appreciation, a determination to rejoice in Mexican successes, an ambition to know our neighbors better, and to share the gifts which they so largely possess, will give us greater days. We can make the choice if we will.



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# PREPARE

FOR THE

## PEACE PLEBISCITE!

CONGREGATIONAL EDUCATION SOCIETY

*Department of World Fellowship*

14 Beacon Street, Boston, Massachusetts

## PREPARE FOR THE PEACE PLEBISCITE!

### I.

At the meeting of the General Council of Congregational and Christian Churches, held in Oberlin in June 1934, a resolution was passed authorizing the Council for Social Action "to take a plebiscite of our denomination to determine the mind of our people" on four propositions or others relating to the question of war and peace.

The reason for doing this is that we may know what the members of Congregational and Christian Churches of the United States think about this question. It is frequently said that the church believes this or that the church is opposed to that; yet most of the time we have no way of knowing. Most votes reveal merely the viewpoint of the majority of delegates attending a State Conference session or a meeting of the General Council. They do not, however, reveal the mind of the majority of the members of the churches. Such a plebiscite as this, it was thought, would give some idea of the actual viewpoint of our constituency.

Another reason for this plebiscite is perhaps even more important. A vote of this kind will provoke discussion, reading, and study. Obviously such consideration ought to *precede the plebiscite* and enlist a very large proportion of the members of our churches. The value of this kind of preparation cannot be overestimated. To take a vote with no preparation would be meaningless and certainly a mistake. To inspire thoughtful study and consideration of the issues involved would be significant even if the vote were never taken.

When the plebiscite comes in November 1935 we should try to secure the expression of every member of a Congregational or Christian Church,—the young people from fifteen to twenty-one as well as the older young people and those who are farther along in years. Prior to the vote, however, the churches have an educational task to perform, and, as an aid in this task, the Education Society sends out this leaflet of suggestions. *It is not intended as a study outline, but seeks merely to point the way to study and discussion.* It is for pastors, program committees of men's clubs or women's societies, young people's leaders, religious education or social relations committees or others whose responsibilities give them some concern for plans looking toward individual study and group consideration of the various points of the plebiscite.

## II.

### THE FORM OF THE PLEBISCITE

The committee responsible for the form of the plebiscite has considered the matter with care and has decided to present it in two sections. It will read as follows:

#### A.

(Each member is asked to check one of the following statements:)

*I believe that I can contribute to the cause of peace:*

- ...1. By bearing arms in or otherwise supporting any war declared by my government.
- ...2. By bearing arms in or otherwise supporting a war declared by my government against any nation which by international action has been adjudged to be an aggressor.
- ...3. By bearing arms in or otherwise supporting a war declared by my government, only as a last resort after the government has exhausted all peaceable means of settlement.
- ...4. By bearing arms in or otherwise supporting a war declared by my government, only in defense of American territory against attack.
- ...5. By refusing to bear arms in and by otherwise opposing any war declared by my government.

#### B.

(Each member is also asked to write "Yes" or "No" after one or more of the following statements:)

*In the meantime, I will work for peace:*

- 1. By advocating for our country:
  - a. Adherence to the World Court.
  - b. Membership in the League of Nations.
  - c. Participation in international conferences.
  - d. A policy of isolation.
  - e. 

Larger	}	army, navy and air forces.
Smaller		
  - f. 

Extension	}	of compulsory military training.
Abolition		
  - g. (Suggest other agencies or measures).....
- 2. By seeking out and attacking the causes of war:
  - a. Economic imperialism.
  - b. Competitive manufacture and sale of munitions.
  - c. National greed and aggressiveness.
  - d. (Suggest other causes).....
- 3. By helping to establish educational processes for international understanding.

### III.

#### THE POINTS OF THE PLEBISCITE EXPLAINED

The five statements of Section A represent separate and distinct positions for each of which a case may be made. The following quotations\* represent the positions of thoughtful advocates of these various points of view:

##### 1. A STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF PROPOSITION NUMBER ONE

*(I believe that I can contribute to the cause of peace, by bearing arms in or otherwise supporting any war declared by my government.)*

"I propose to stand by my government because I am convinced that the only way in which I can contribute to the peace of the world is by helping to create a strong, self-reliant United States. It will be impossible to win unity and strength within our borders unless all American citizens stand together for the distinctive genius of their country. Unless Americans stand together they will be lost in the confusions and conflicts which today tear the world apart. We must build an America so strong, so proud, and so self-respecting that it will be able to speak with conviction and persuasion in the councils of the nations. I accept my citizenship as a solemn trust. I abhor war, but if war is necessary in order to protect my country I expect to do my part. Citizenship cannot be assumed conditionally or with reservations. Citizenship demands the whole of a man's loyalty. A citizen is duty-bound to do what he can to influence his country in making wise decisions, but when a national decision has been made the citizen has no choice. The citizen who yields anything less than one hundred per cent loyalty to his nation is guilty of gross betrayal."

##### 2. A STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF PROPOSITION NUMBER TWO

*(I believe that I can contribute to the cause of peace by bearing arms in or otherwise supporting a war declared by my government against any nation which by international action has been adjudged to be an aggressor.)*

"The Covenant of the League of Nations offers admirable means for the peaceful settlement of disputes and members of the League have pledged themselves not to resort to war without having first tried one of them.

"In order for nations to place their confidence in the League system for their own defense instead of relying wholly on their own armaments, and to devote themselves to peaceful progress rather than to waste their energy on preparations for war, they must have assurance that they will not be attacked, when off their guard, by a nation acting in defiance of its obligations under the Covenant.

"The most effective guarantee and the most powerful deterrent to a nation contemplating a resort to arms would be the certainty that such use of force would be met by the vastly superior force of an aroused community of nations.

"The Covenant provides for the use of coercive measures or sanctions against an aggressor nation. But the great powers at least, upon whom the burden of enforcement must rest, have been unwilling to risk the use of force for the sake of peace. Recent manifestations that nations can with impunity pursue a war of conquest have led to an appalling loss of confidence in the League system and have been a major factor in the menacing growth of nationalism which may well result in another world conflagration.

\*These quotations appeared in ADVANCE for March 14, March 28, April 4, April 11, and April 18, 1935.

"If in but one instance violation of Covenant obligations brought down upon the head of the offending nation simultaneous coercive action, the authority of the League system would be so enhanced that such employment of sanctions would not again be necessary.

"Individual citizens, therefore, by staunchly supporting their government in international forceful coercion of a declared aggressor will make possible a renewed confidence in the League machinery, upon which the peace of the world must depend."

—Mr. Clark M. Eichelberger, *Director of the League of Nations Association*

### 3. A STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF PROPOSITION NUMBER THREE

*(I believe that I can contribute to the cause of peace by bearing arms in or otherwise supporting a war declared by my government, only as a last resort after the government has exhausted all peaceable means of settlement.)*

"The third statement . . . . . was suggested by the two following paragraphs, which conclude a letter sent to President Roosevelt last May (1934) with the signatures of more than a hundred college presidents:

We desire to express our belief that unless our government has made complete use of every available agency for peace and taken every possible step to prevent the coming of war, it has no moral right to ask of the youth of America the sacrifice, in war, of themselves, their opportunities for the future, and the companionship of the men and women of their generation whom they hold dear, or to subject them and their children to a renewal of the post-war conditions which have so impoverished and degraded the only life they have known.

It is our judgment that support and aid in the conduct of a war cannot rightly be asked unless every effort possible to human ingenuity has been made to prevent such war.

"The letter in which these paragraphs occur set forth an eight-point program of proposed Congressional action looking toward peace. It should be noted that the paragraphs quoted were not intended to constitute a pledge, or to suggest the taking of a pledge. They do, however, represent a position which is, I believe, an inherently reasonable one, and has, I believe, the hearty agreement of a very great number of those who, as educators, are constantly and profoundly aware of the infinite value of the life which is surging in the youth of America today."

—President Ernest Hatch Wilkins, *Oberlin College.*

### 4. A STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF PROPOSITION NUMBER FOUR

*(I believe that I can contribute to the cause of peace by bearing arms in or otherwise supporting a war declared by my government, only in defense of American territory against attack.)*

"(1) Proposition Four realistically reserves the right of self-defense against actual invasion. A sound social psychology must recognize that only a very small minority of us are sufficiently pacifist to stand by with folded arms in face of armed attack upon our homes.

"(2) This proposition, however, renounces all war to settle international disputes, collect debts, extend territory, protect trade, raise blockades, or enforce policies. Such conflicts need settlement. But war is the worst of all ways to deal with them. Its cruelty, waste, social disintegration and subsequent bitterness are too high a price to pay.

"(3) Proposition Four really represents the position of the Kellogg Peace Pact. By it the individual citizen says in effect: 'I, too, renounce war as an instrument of national policy and promise to seek the settlement of international disputes by pacific means alone.' Thus he reinforces his government in its most forward-looking action toward world peace. This is practical patriotism of a high order.

"(4) By contemplating resort to arms only in case of actual invasion, Proposition Four says in effect: 'I accept President Roosevelt's proposed definition of an aggressor as one who sends hostile armed forces across his border. I will not be an aggressor! I will never leave my country to kill or destroy in anybody else's homeland!'

"(5) This renunciation of invasion of other countries would remove the fear which is used to justify armament races. It would reduce the army to a 'home guard' enlisted for service only on American soil and make the navy purely defensive in type, function and enlistment.

"(6) If all peace-lovers who hesitate to commit themselves in advance to absolute pacifism would at least take this stand not to invade other people's homelands, international fear would be reduced, disarmament made feasible and our whole world psychology slanted toward peace instead of war."

—President Albert W. Palmer, *Chicago Theological Seminary*

## 5. A STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF PROPOSITION NUMBER FIVE

*(I believe that I can contribute to the cause of peace by refusing to bear arms in and by otherwise opposing any war declared by my government.)*

"No thoughtful pacifist, committed to a policy of individual non-participation in war, supposes that his strategy is a complete solution of the war question. Indeed, if ever he has to put his policy into active operation by going to prison for opposing a war, it will be evident that the peace forces have lamentably failed. He is convinced, however, that, along with the major political and economic measures on which the substitution of a peace system for the present war system depends, his personal conscientious, absolute refusal of any part in war is of crucial importance.

"First, the mounting number of such conscientious objectors to war is already a deterrent to governments. The more numerous such absolute objectors become, the more reluctant any government must be to undertake war.

"Second, amid the constant breakdown of peace movements and the consequent popular disillusionment over the failure of disarmament conferences, this stand of the pacifists offers both a positive strategy for the individual and, when multiplied, an influential declaration of faith that war must go, and that, if governments will not outlaw war, Christian consciences, at any rate, will do so at all costs.

"Third, the pacifist's stand presents to the pacifist himself a powerful motive for practical devotion to all measures likely to prevent war and establish peace. None of us wishes to have to choose prison rather than 'patriotism' in a war crisis, but we shall be compelled to do so unless we can outlaw the war system. Therefore, to the thoughtful pacifist his individual pledge of non-participation, far from being a substitute for other efforts, furnishes the strongest urgency to them.

"Fourth, regardless of all visible practical effects, the pledge of the pacifist is evidence that there still is, in the midst of society, a Christian minority which will endure anything rather than become sponsor of and participant in the organized mass murder which modern war is. That pacifist group is now and will increasingly be an animated conscience, dis-

turbing the compliance of others with the *status quo*, and challenging the whole church not to render unto Caesar the things that are God's."

—Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, *Riverside Church, New York*

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Section B offers the opportunity to express approval or disapproval of each of a number of ways of working for world peace. Each of these needs a paragraph of comment.

(1a) "*Adherence to the World Court.*"

The Permanent Court of International Justice (commonly called the World Court) was set up by the League of Nations. Its first judges were elected in September 1921 and its first session opened in January 1922. Its fifteen judges are chosen from different countries and serve for a term of nine years. During its first 13 years it handed down judgments in 22 cases and rendered 25 advisory opinions. Its history is given in the book "The World Court" listed in Section V. Those who oppose our adherence to it insist on such objections as the following: It was established by the League of Nations and is therefore tied up to the League; its work has not been significant; it means entanglement in European affairs; it requires the giving up of our own rights. Those who favor adherence argue that it is a practical way of substituting law for war; that its achievements justify its existence; that it is not subordinate to the League of Nations; that the nations of the world and their interests are so intertwined that we must have international machinery for peace; that the method of the World Court is exactly the same as the method used within any nation for the settlement of differences, and that this is merely an extension of this method.

(1b) "*Membership in the League of Nations.*"

The League of Nations came into existence January 10, 1920. In May 1935 the membership was 59 nations. Its Council has 5 permanent members and 9 non-permanent members and meets three times a year. The assembly meets annually. The United States is not a member. Some object to membership because of a fear of entangling alliances; some think membership would make our participation in future wars more likely; some object to the organization of the League itself or its relation to the Treaty of Versailles. Those who favor membership regard it as a force for peace; they think its effectiveness would be greater if the United States were a member; they regard actual isolation as impossible; they believe that we must have some international machinery and that we should utilize this as an effective and a "going concern." Much has been written on both sides. "A Brief History of the League of Nations" is published by the League of Nations Association, 8 West 40th St., New York, for 15 cents.

(1c) "*Participation in International Conferences.*"

There have been many such conferences in the last ten years,—on war debts, economic questions, the limitation of armaments, etc. The Wash-

ington Naval Conference was regarded as significant. Later there was the London Naval Conference. The World Conference for the Reduction of Armaments, opened at Geneva on February 2, 1932 with 61 nations participating. Ought we remain aloof from such conferences or should we participate, working with the rest of the world in an attempt to solve world problems? While recognizing their limitations, many testify that the values of such conferences are far beyond any *immediate* results.

(1d) "*A Policy of Isolation.*"

Such questions as these may be raised: Is such a policy possible? Is such a policy desirable? Can we continue to trade with other nations and follow a policy of isolation? What would be the effect of such a policy on our diplomatic service and on international treaties? The answer to this question may be a relative, rather than an absolute "yes" or "no."

(1e) "  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Larger} \\ \text{Smaller} \end{array} \right\}$  *Army, Navy and Air Forces.*"

Some of the courses listed in Section IV deal directly and indirectly with this question. In the history of nations has the increase in armed forces made war more likely or less likely? What is the relation of big armament to taxes? To what extent is big armament voted as a result of the activities of those who profit by its sale? Do large armies make it easier or more difficult for nations to advocate law instead of war as a way of settling disputes? Can a nation risk reducing its armed forces if other nations are increasing theirs? These are among the problems we must face as we prepare to answer this question of the plebiscite.

(1f) "  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Extension} \\ \text{Abolition} \end{array} \right\}$  *of Compulsory Military Training.*"

Many reasons are advanced for military training,—the need for preparedness and its character-building value being two of the arguments. Many reasons are advanced against such a course,—that military training is a repression of one's individuality, that education should not be subordinated to the military, the psychological effect of military training which makes the war method appear as normal and inevitable! Sometimes this training is on a compulsory basis; should this compulsory feature be extended or abolished, the plebiscite asks. Our educational institutions differ widely on this point; while the Trustees of Connecticut State College pass a resolution making the mere agitation or public discussion of this question by student or professor a cause for removal, the University of Minnesota, for example, abolishes the compulsory feature entirely.

(2.) "*By Seeking Out and Attacking the Causes of War.*"

If a person does not regard the three items listed as the causes of war, or as causes that should be attacked, his answers will be "no." If these seem

to him to be causes of war to be opposed and removed his answers will be "yes."

(2a) One of these suggested causes is *economic imperialism*,—the Attempt of a nation to dominate the economic life of other nations for its own interest,—the policy of a government to use its power in other countries to give its own citizens advantage and protection in matters of business and trade. Economic imperialism may manifest itself in the form of tariff barriers, in "Buy American" slogans, in the use of the navy to protect investments, and in other ways that will bring commercial supremacy to one's own people at the expense of citizens of other countries. Is this a cause of war? Is it inevitable? Is it a policy that ought or ought not to be opposed?

(2b) A second of these suggested causes is the *competitive manufacture and sale of munitions*. With all that has been said about armament manufacture during 1934 and 1935 there is still much debate about the best method of control. Some of the courses described in Section IV deal with this issue as do a few of the books listed in Section V. As long as the making and selling of munitions is left to private agencies, on the usual competitive basis of business, without control, is the danger of war greater? There are many possibilities,—national control, international control, nationalization, etc. But whatever form you advocate, if you think there should be some control and that the competitive manufacture and sale should be opposed your answer will be "yes"; otherwise, it will be "no."

(2c) A third suggested cause is "national greed and aggressiveness." No statement could be clearer. If you think that greed and the desire for power and territory are ever causes of war, and if you are willing to oppose these causes, your answer will be "yes"; otherwise, it will be "no."

(3) "*I will work for peace by helping to establish educational processes for international understanding.*"

This is a declaration to use the educational method in working for peace. Do we believe that children should be led to a deeper appreciation of the life of other peoples? Are we ready to work for an educational program for our young people on matters of peace and war? Do we believe in a program of adult education and think it should include such problems as international relations? Are we ready to harmonize our efforts with our belief, *e.g.*, by including peace courses in the church school curriculum or allying oneself with a peace organization that represents one's point of view? This section is not merely a statement of belief; it is a pledge to do something. One *may* answer this question in the negative; but if one answers in the affirmative it means, not only that one *believes* in the educational method of approach to these problems, but that one intends to do something about the task of setting up or improving the educational program relating to peace and international affairs, in church or home or community.

#### IV.

#### SHORT COURSES FOR STUDY AND GROUP DISCUSSION\*

The five courses listed in this section are inexpensive and up-to-date. Each booklet costs only 25 or 35 cents and all are 1935 publications. They are suitable for the use of Sunday morning classes, a series of young people's meetings, meetings of women's societies or men's clubs, church night series, or discussion groups organized for the sole purpose of preparing for the plebiscite. All are equally appropriate for individual reading and study.

1. "What Can Christians Do for Peace?" by Theodore A. Greene. Pilgrim Press, 1935. 25 cents. For adults or older young people. Eight chapters on The Religious Basis for Our Interest in Peace; The Problem of Our Loyalty to the Church and the State; Our Tragic Heritage from the World War; Some Causes of War and a Cure; Improving the World's Peace Machinery; The Rising Tides of Nationalism; Next Steps for Action through Government; Making a Beginning in Our Church. Each chapter contains suggestive questions, discussion material and a list of reference books. It may be used for eight sessions or less, prior to the November plebiscite.

2. "Is War the Way?" by John L. Lobingier. Pilgrim Press, 1935. 25 cents. A six-session course for young people or adults on these themes: This Peace Issue; Patriotism, Nationalism, Christianity, or What?; Two Ways of Settling Difficulties; Profits and Peace; What Others are Doing; Your Point of View. The various chapters include background material, concrete illustrations, suggestions for discussion, and meditations. There is a bibliography, an annotated list of peace plays, and a list of agencies that can furnish help. The course leads logically to a consideration of the peace plebiscite, which is specifically discussed in the sixth chapter.

3. "Proposed Roads to Peace" by Richard M. Fagley. Pilgrim Press, 1935. 35 cents. This booklet is recommended as background material for leaders of groups using another text for their classes. It may also be used as a reading book and as a basis for class discussion by more thoughtful young people and adults. Its five chapters deal with The Problem of Peace; Nationalism; Internationalism; Capitalism and Socialism; Pacifism and Religion.

4. "The Ghost of Caesar Walks" by Henry S. Leiper. Friendship Press, 1935. 35 cents. A six-session unit written for young people but equally good for adults. It is a discriminating treatment of the whole question of nationalism in its relation to Christianity. While this does not have to do with the plebiscite as specifically as the three courses mentioned above, it deals with a fundamental and related question.

5. "Youth Action in Building a Warless World" by Irwin G. Paulsen. International Council of Religious Education, 1935. 15 cents. This is

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\*Any books listed in this pamphlet may be ordered from the Pilgrim Press, 14 Beacon St., Boston, or 19 South LaSalle St., Chicago.

written, not as a course of study, but as *suggestions for action*. As such it may be made the basis for a group's discussion or used as supplementary material in connection with another course.

6. A group may build its own course, using the plebiscite itself as a basis for study. In so doing the members will find help in the statements of Section III of this pamphlet. Any of the five courses mentioned above or any of the books listed in the following section will be found useful for reference.

## V.

### OTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR READING AND REFERENCE

#### 1. PERIODICALS

*Peace Action*, published monthly by the National Council for Prevention of War, 532-17th St., N. W., Washington, D. C. 50 cents a year. Contains a wealth of up-to-date information.

*Social Action*, published 20 times a year by the Council for Social Action of the Congregational and Christian Churches, 287 Fourth Ave., New York. \$1.00 a year. One of our denominational organs in which the peace and war issue is given a prominent place.

*Breaking the War Habit*, a bulletin published six times a year by the Committee on Militarism in Education, 2929 Broadway, New York. 25 cents a year.

*Pax Internationale*, the publication of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 532-17th St., N. W., Washington, D. C. 50 cents a year.

*News Letter* of the World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches, 70 Fifth Ave., New York. A service for members.

*Chronicle of World Affairs*, published twice a month by the League of Nations Association, 8 West 40th St., New York. 50 cents a year.

*World Events*, published twice a month, except in the summer, by Nofrontier News Service, Wilton, Conn. 25 cents a year.

#### 2. BOOKS

"Religion Renounces War" by W. W. VanKirk. 1934. \$2.00.

The statements of churchmen and church bodies on many questions related to war.

"Peace and the Plain Man" by Norman Angell. 1935. \$2.50.

A plain statement of the question in the light of post-war events.

"Peace With Honour" by A. A. Milne. 1934, \$2.00.

An author of note writes on the war system and what is involved in renouncing it.

"One Hell of a Business" by H. C. Engelbrecht. 1934. \$1.00.

A summary of the early results of the Nye investigation.

"War is a Racket" by Major General Smedley Butler. 1935. Cloth \$1.00; paper 50 cents.

On war profiteers; with a three-point program for "smashing the racket of war."

"The Arms Inquiry" by Paul Hutchinson.

A 24-page pamphlet, 10 cents. The Christian Century, 440 So. Dearborn Sts., Chicago. A summary.

- "The Pipe Dream of Peace" by John W. Wheeler-Bennett. 1935. \$3.00.  
Generally regarded as the best interpretation of the Geneva Disarmament Conference.
- "The Price of Peace" by Frank H. Simonds and Brooks Emeny. 1935. \$3.00.
- "Cry Havoc!" by Beverly Nichols. 1933. \$2.50.  
On the munitions business and other aspects of the war question.
- "The World Court: 1931-1934" by Manley O. Hudson. 1934. Cloth \$2.50; paper 75 cents.  
A history and explanation of the work of the Court.
- "Educating for Peace" by E. M. and J. L. Lobingier. 1930. \$1.50.  
Peace education in church, home and school.
- "One Hundred Poems of Peace," compiled by T. C. Clark and W. E. Garrison. 1934. \$1.25.  
A good collection of old and new peace poems.
- "World Diary, 1929-34" by Quincy Howe. 1934. \$3.50.
- "Mobilizing for Chaos" by G. W. Riegel. 1934. \$2.50.
- "The Road to War, 1914-1917" by Walter Millis. 1935. \$3.50.
- "Merchants of Death" by H. C. Englebrecht and F. C. Hanighen. 1934. \$2.50.  
On the activities of munition makers.

## VI.

### AGENCIES THAT CAN FURNISH HELP\*

1. *Council for Social Action* of the Congregational and Christian Churches, 287 Fourth Ave., New York. (Factual materials of all kinds.)
2. *Congregational Education Society*, 14 Beacon St., Boston. (Lists of peace plays, and suggestions for peace education for adults, young people, or children.)
3. *National Council for Prevention of War*, 532-17th St., N. W., Washington, D. C. (One of the best agencies for peace material of all kinds.)
4. *Peace Posters Press*, P. O. Box 703, Baltimore, Md. (Publishes posters with terse statements. Two sizes available.)
5. *World Peaceways*, 103 Park Ave., New York. (Publishes peace posters.)
6. *Committee on Militarism in Education*, 2929 Broadway, New York. (Best source of information in regard to military training in schools and colleges.)
7. *Commission on International Justice and Goodwill* of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, 105 East 22nd St., New York. (Sponsors some activities and publishes occasional materials.)
8. *Women's International League for Peace and Freedom*, 532-17th St., N. W., Washington, D. C. (Suggestions for women's groups in matters of study and action.)

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\*These agencies are interested in what may be called the modern peace movement. No attempt is here made to list agencies recognized as advocating extreme militarism.

## HOW, WHEN AND WHERE TO PREPARE FOR THE PLEBISCITE

1. *In the Home.* Just as the family is the primary institution so the home is the primary place in which to study living issues and exchange points of view. Everyone reads books and magazines in the home. During the months before the taking of the plebiscite some of the reading in every family may well include such titles as those listed in Sections IV and V. Church committees may see that some of these are available for borrowing from the library of the church or from the public library.

This is a good subject for table-talk and general home conversation. "Peace Crusaders" by Anna B. Griscom, "Through the Gateway" and "Across Borderlines" by Florence B. Boeckel are the kind of peace books that may be placed in the hands of the boys and girls of the family to secure their intelligent participation in such conversations. Young people and adults, however, are referred to the books and magazines that deal specifically and constructively with current peace issues.

2. *Adult Discussion Groups.* Men's or women's classes in the church school often use a number of unrelated courses during the year, thus insuring variety of approach and a wide range of interest. To such classes the courses listed in Section IV are commended for the early fall. The booklet, "Adult Learning in the Church"\* outlines the advantage of gathering together a small group of perhaps seven to ten people, without formal organization, to study and confer together on one particular subject. The peace plebiscite may become the occasion for gathering such a group, to consider one of the courses recommended, prior to the date when the vote is to be taken in November.
3. *Young People's Groups.* The program of the Pilgrim Fellowship is described as "Christian Youth Building a New World." This has become a slogan with the young people of many denominations as they strive to make some real progress in nine different fields, one of which is "Assisting in Bringing about World Peace." The young people of the church, therefore, will not be deviating from their program, but simply carrying it out, if they spend some weeks in preparing for the peace plebiscite. They may choose from the possibilities of Section IV and devote the time of their Sunday morning class or of their Sunday evening meetings to this project.
4. *Forums or Panel Discussions in the Church.* One or more Sunday evenings may be devoted to the issues involved in the plebiscite. The program may be in the form of a panel discussion, with six members on the panel, —a chairman and five others, each chosen to represent one of the five points of view given in Section A of the plebiscite. The chairman will begin with a clear, brief statement of the case; for forty-five minutes,

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\*A copy may be secured, free, from the Congregational Education Society.

more or less, the six will converse among themselves on the whole question under discussion, thus making clear the conflicting viewpoints with the advantage of free rejoinder; following this, members of the congregation may raise questions or participate in the discussion. Some of the items of Section B of the plebiscite furnish equally good opportunities for a panel discussion.

Some may prefer a forum, especially if it is possible to secure a capable speaker, well versed in the questions at issue. His address will be followed by general participation of the group, either in questions or in discussion.

5. *Week-Night Meetings of the Church.* If it is customary for the church to hold a regular mid-week service the plebiscite may furnish the subject for a group of these meetings during the summer or fall. The meetings may take the form of a study group or the sections of the plebiscite may be used as a basis for a series of topics. Even churches that have no regular week-night service do have occasional "church nights," and this is suggested as the theme for church nights in October and November.
6. *Training Courses and Institutes.* The Leadership Training program of our own and other denominations has become so popular that a large proportion of churches include people who have completed satisfactorily some of the courses of the curriculum,—in local church classes, community schools, summer conferences, or by correspondence. A course on peace education is an appropriate part of the leadership training program of the fall and such a course may be included in a church or community school. Even though not patently related to the plebiscite it would serve as an indirect preparation for it.
7. *Summer Conferences.* Every summer conference has an opportunity for peace education. Some include adult courses on training for peace; in others there are young people's courses on youth and the problems related to war. Still others have general courses in world fellowship or missions, or young people's discussion groups in which the leader, if he chooses, may find a place for this question. There are also vesper services, seminars, and conference assemblies, some of which may be used with the November plebiscite in mind. The indefinable atmosphere of the summer conference is such that its influences are as enduring as any of the year. The summer institutes of International Relations, in which our Council for Social Action cooperates with the Friends' Committee, offer splendid opportunities for international study.

## VIII

### SUGGESTIONS FOR THE ACTUAL TAKING OF THE VOTE

The churches will follow many different methods of taking the vote. Some person or some committee, however, will have to assume the responsibility if the plan is to be carried through in each particular church. In most cases the Pastor is likely to be the one to initiate the plan; many times it will be the leader of the women's society; it may be a layman; it may be one of the young people. No matter who it is that takes the lead, the carrying out of the enterprise will have to be in the hands of some committee. What committee? Sometimes a committee is already functioning which is clearly the logical one for this responsibility. A church that has a standing committee on social action or social relations will naturally expect it to arrange for the taking of the plebiscite. Some churches may recognize the Religious Education Committee as the proper agency. Many, however, will appoint a special committee to care for this one task.

Printed forms will be available. These may be passed, marked, and gathered at a regular service of the church. If so, there will need to be a follow-up of absent members which may be by mail or by personal visitation. Many young people's groups will welcome the opportunity of having a part in this task and may be willing to care for this follow-up. If the young people are to have a share in the work, however, they ought to have a share in the planning, with one or more representatives on the planning committee.

A second possibility is to take the entire vote by means of an every-member canvass. It is sometimes said that there is never an every-member visitation in the church except for money; this is a chance to prove such a statement untrue. The plebiscite offers an opportunity for a carefully planned visit to every home, not for pledges, but for an expression of viewpoints.

A third possibility is to take the vote by mail. In many ways this may prove to be the best method for there will then be ample time for thought and intelligent marking. On the other hand it is not likely to bring as large returns. A stamped, addressed envelope for reply will greatly increase the proportion of votes returned.

This plebiscite on peace is an educational opportunity. Much of its value will come from the preparation of the weeks and months prior to the vote. But the actual taking of the vote also has educational value, for it compels each of us to focus attention upon these points at issue, to make decisions, and to go on record for or against certain positions. All of this is a part of the educational process.

